

at that time the first person of Mexican descent to serve in that body in more than 100 years. Elected to the Eighty-seventh Congress on November 4, 1961, HENRY has honorably and tirelessly served his constituents and his country for 35 years in the United States House of Representatives.

A sign that has hung on the door of his office for many years sums up his perspective on the seat he has held in Congress. It reads, "This office belongs to the people of the 20th Congressional District of Texas."

In January, 1962, HENRY was appointed to serve as a member of the Committee on Banking and Currency, which is known today as the Committee on Banking and Financial Services. There he served with distinction as the chairman of the Subcommittee on Housing from 1981 to 1994, and chairman of the full committee from 1989 to 1994.

When HENRY became chairman of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services in 1989, the Nation was facing the most costly financial crisis in the history of the United States, the half a trillion dollar savings and loan debacle.

Throughout this crisis HENRY GONZALEZ led the Congress in enacting legislation to protect depositors, bring stability back to the beleaguered thrift industry, and restore the strength and integrity of the deposit insurance system. His leadership helped to avoid an even larger financial crisis with even more dire implications for the national economy.

On the heels of enacting this legislation HENRY held numerous hearings to bring to light the abuses of some of the Nation's most notorious financiers. An old-fashioned liberal, HENRY never had a conflict of interest. He did not simply advocate, he lived campaign reform. His only special interest was his constituents. He never let them down, nor did they ever countenance an alternative. Honesty has its rewards.

While HENRY's work as the chairman of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services was marked by a commitment to protect the consumer, perhaps his greatest accomplishments can be found in his tireless devotion to improving the status of public housing and helping the Nation's poor.

As a young Hispanic male in San Antonio, and later in his work as a social worker, HENRY experienced and witnessed firsthand the effects of discrimination and the economic disenfranchisement of the poor.

The record of HENRY's tenure as chairman of the Subcommittee on Housing illustrates his commitment to helping those in need. Under his direction, the Subcommittee on Housing held the first hearing in January, 1983, on the growing homeless population of the United States, which led in 1987 to the enactment of comprehensive legislation to address the needs of the homeless, the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act.

As colleagues on the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, HENRY and I have held differing positions on a number of issues, particularly in matters involving the independence of the Federal Reserve Board. But Congressman GONZALEZ has been clearly right and deserves great credit for certain of his efforts to bring about more transparency to the operations of the Federal Reserve. He has also led Congress in efforts to uncover money laundering in various parts of the country, particularly in the San Antonio Federal Reserve District.

The legislative achievements of HENRY GONZALEZ, spanning more than three decades of service in the Congress, are far too numerous to mention during this special order. But the many public service awards and honors that have been bestowed on him over the years, including the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award, stand as testaments to the difference HENRY GONZALEZ has made.

It is often said that the true riches in one's life can be measured by the lives one has touched and changed for the better. Throughout his career in public service, HENRY GONZALEZ has steadfastly stood up for those less advantaged in American life. He has literally represented and improved the lives of millions. For his honorableness, for his commitment to basic values, for his remembrance of his own roots, we in this House this evening honor a giant of a man, HENRY B. GONZALEZ of Texas.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE HENRY B. GONZALEZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore [Mr. BRADY]. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from California [Mr. BECERRA] is recognized to continue not beyond 11:18 p.m. as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of the committee for his eloquent remarks on behalf of the gentleman from Texas [Mr. GONZALEZ].

Mr. Speaker, I see the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE], who has been a voice, in many respects, helping replace the voice of HENRY B. GONZALEZ from Texas in her passionate way, and a good friend of mine. I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE].

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from California, and I appreciate his leadership, along with the Dean-to-be of the Texas delegation, for his leadership as well in calling this special order to pay tribute to one who stands among us as a great, great, great American. That is, Congressman HENRY B. GONZALEZ.

Let me discard all of the words that I might have wanted to say, for they would take longer than even the time that I might consume. I might want to continue giving praises to a true gentleman, a gentle giant, and not in physical structure, but certainly in

mind and in heart; someone who, before it was in vogue, if you will, to be politically correct, was a valiant battler, a soldier, a person who would stoop and lift up those who may be trying to traverse those trials and tribulations of life. That was HENRY B., as he was and is affectionately called.

It is worthy to note that he was first elected in 1961, that he has served his country for some 36 years, and he served it with pride. There was never a moment when he was not proud of the fact that he came from a community such as San Antonio, where he rose up, if you will, from the ashes, not in a negative way, not to say that he could not, but that he did, and that in his own way he was a role model for all to follow, a proud Hispanic American, a proud Latino, someone who always said, yes, I can.

For that reason I admired him, and as a Texan, loved him, and recognized that when I could not speak, when African-Americans were not in the State Senate, HENRY B. GONZALEZ spoke on our behalf, carried our message; said that we, too, in Texas deserved the equality of all human beings.

Yes, he continued to raise that leadership role as he pressed forward on issues dealing with all Americans, and particularly he emphasized his proud heritage as a Hispanic American, and someone who rose up and shined his particular light, not for himself, but for others.

I think it is important to note, Mr. Speaker, that Congressman GONZALEZ, along with his subcommittee chairman, but under his leadership, conducted more than 500 hearings and shepherded 71 bills through the legislative process, from introduction to enactment. I think we might say that HENRY B. GONZALEZ was not just holding the Chair, he was actually working the Chair; 500 hearings, because he believed in this process.

I think HENRY B. GONZALEZ felt that this was the best place that he could live his life, because he thought there was something worthy to the fact that we debated the issues of this country, that we did not go out on the front lawn and get pistols and shoot at each other. He truly exemplified that process.

I would like to comment on the fact that he thought of those who were most vulnerable, as I have said before, by guaranteeing depositors to have a safe place to put their savings, and to make more credit available to small businesses, reauthorizing Federal housing laws, and strengthening the laws pertaining to money laundering, bank fraud, and other financial crimes. The savings and loan industry was reorganized and revitalized during his tenure. He certainly was a man of strength during an hour of crisis for our savings and loans.

He was a good friend of the holders of the seat, and in particular, the Honorable Barbara Jordan and Mickey Land.

One point that I would like to emphasize that was truly of importance to HENRY B. GONZALEZ, and that was his commitment to every single American having a good quality of life. That is why many called him the champion of public housing.

We are now engaged in a long debate about the reform of public housing and what the public housing residents should do. We disagree, we agree. Many of us have disagreed with the new reform. But one thing we can agree with is that HENRY B. GONZALEZ truly had a heart of gold as it related to those Americans who lived in public housing. They viewed him as their hero, someone who wanted for them the same dignity as any one of us who might live in our own independent housing, or other types of housing.

So he fought for good quality housing in public housing. He fought for the Housing and Urban Development Agency to do right by those residents, to provide them with opportunities. He likewise felt that as he worked for their opportunities, that they would also look for chances to move out of public housing. He was a big believer in giving each American the chance to have the American dream.

Mr. Speaker, let me say, in the words of the Honorable Mickey Leland, the late Congressman Mickey Leland, who often said, "Mi casa es su casa," his term was utilized for the purpose of realizing that my house is your house. It means that in fact, as I stand in need, you may be in need. We are all in this together.

HENRY B. GONZALEZ exemplified that phrase, that he would work for all the people; that his house was our house, that our house was his house. I truly will miss his leadership and his spirit, the fact of his gentleness but yet his firmness, his ability to fight. I will truly fight on his behalf for his legacy, that we all will recognize *mi casa es su casa*, we are all in this together. Thank you, HENRY B., for all that you have done for America.

Mr. Speaker, Congressman HENRY B. GONZALEZ of the 20th Congressional District, who has nobly served his constituents and our great nation for 36 years in the House of Representatives, is leaving us at the end of this session.

First elected in 1961, HENRY B. as he is affectionately known, made his mark as Chairman of the Banking Committee for six years. During his tenure as Banking Committee Chairman (1989–1994), Congressman GONZALEZ and his subcommittee chairmen conducted more than 500 hearings and shepherded 71 bills through the legislative process from introduction to enactment. Among the major bills produced by the Committee that became law was legislation guaranteeing depositors a safe place to put their savings, making more credit available to small businesses, reauthorizing federal housing laws, and strengthening the laws pertaining to money laundering, bank fraud, and other financial crimes. The savings and loan industry was reorganized and revitalized during his tenure. He certainly was a man of strength during

an hour of crisis for our savings and loan industry.

Congressman GONZALEZ worked tirelessly for the residents of public housing and the National Housing Trust is a testament to his leadership in Public Housing. There are millions of Americans today who are able to find affordable housing because of this great man.

In previous congresses Congressman GONZALEZ has been active in writing other banking and housing laws, and involved in a wide range of legislation—including urban development, veterans, federal employees, education, economic development, civil rights, equal opportunity, safe drinking water, protection of the interests of U.S. citizens in foreign countries which benefit from U.S. contributions to international development institutions.

We will miss this fine gentleman, we will miss his spirit of service with a true sense of honor.

□ 2300

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, let me first thank the gentlewoman from Texas for those words of praise and I know they are appreciated, not just by Mr. GONZALEZ, but by all of us who appreciate the work that he has done as well.

Mr. Speaker, I yield now to the gentlewoman from New York [Mrs. MALONEY] who is a member of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, and a friend of Mr. GONZALEZ.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and I thank him for organizing this tribute tonight for HENRY B.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a friend, a great American, who is an icon of the civil rights movement and one of the truly great congressmen of our time, HENRY B. GONZALEZ. Throughout HENRY B.'s 44 years in public service, he has served his constituents well through his dedication, dignity, and honesty.

When I came to Congress in 1992, what impressed me so much was how HENRY, as the Committee on Banking and Financial Services Chairman, reached out to me as a freshman and offered assistance. As Chairman, he guided me, and time and time again he was there. When HENRY B. tells you something he will do, it happens.

During floor debate on one of my first legislative proposals, an amendment to the Department of Defense Appropriations Act of 1994 that would remove the funding for the Civilian Marksmanship Program, this was a program that had been put in the budget after the War of 1812. It was a piece of petrified pork and I wanted to remove it, not only to save taxpayers money but to understand the budget process better.

Mr. Speaker, I will never forget going to the floor on my first amendment and having the Chairman of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services come to the floor and support me. I was so touched, I looked up his comments and I want to put them in the RECORD and remember them always. Mr. Chairman, I would say to the gen-

tleman from Texas, "I appreciate your coming that day to help me, HENRY."

Congressman HENRY GONZALEZ will be remembered for speaking honestly and bluntly about the need for oversight of the U.S. Federal Reserve. Over the years his tireless efforts helped to crack open the Federal Reserve by urging them to immediately announce its monetary policy decisions and to begin publishing the minutes of its Monetary Policy Committee in 1994. From the changes he brought to the Central Bank, many have benefited.

The most touching story I have about HENRY B. took place during the first hearing at which Secretary Henry Cisneros testified in 1993. As he began his testimony, Secretary Cisneros described how when he was growing up in rural Texas his family had a portrait of HENRY B. GONZALEZ on the wall. To them, to the Cisneros family, and to many Hispanics in Texas, HENRY was more than a politician. He was a hero. At that moment, I truly understood just how deeply he had touched the lives of other people. I remember Secretary Cisneros saying that he never thought in his life he would have the honor to speak before HENRY B. GONZALEZ.

HENRY was kind. He even was kind enough to do me a favor. When I went back to my district, many of the banks asked if HENRY GONZALEZ could come to visit New York City, since he never had before. Well, I went to him and asked him personally if he would make the trip and he agreed. It was a great session. Just questions and answers, dialog, discussions back and forth. I know that HENRY liked to spend most of his free time back in his district, so I really appreciate his friendship when he did this favor for me.

Mr. Speaker, this body is a better place for having had HENRY GONZALEZ serve here. But more importantly, this country is a better place for him having served here. All Americans will miss his presence.

I would like, Mr. Speaker, to put into the RECORD a news article written by Molly Ivins that was published on September 9, 1997, and it is entitled, "We should have listened to HENRY B." She goes through all the times that HENRY B. stood up honestly talking about the bank scandal, the RTC bailout, the savings and loan scandal, always speaking up for what he believed in, for what he thought was right.

Mr. Speaker, I must say to the gentleman from Texas, "I always listened, HENRY B. We miss you HENRY. We wish you were here. We all appreciate your public service and your contribution to this country."

WE SHOULD HAVE LISTENED TO HENRY B.

(By Molly Ivins)

AUSTIN.—We hope Henry B. is enjoying all the bouquets being tossed his way. Hard to think of anyone who deserves them more. Notice how often the word "honorable" occurs in the political obits? Of how many people now serving in the United States Congress is "honorable" the first word that

comes to mind? But me, I wish we had honored this honorable man less on his way out of our political life and had listened to him more.

It's amazing, when you look at the record, how often Henry B. Gonzalez was right—many times when nobody else was. If only we had listened. If only Congress had listened that night in 1981 when it was passing the Garn-St. Germain bill between midnight and 1 a.m. with no debate. The new Reagan administration was full of ideological certitude that deregulation was what the country needed—get the government off business's back, get rid of all the petty rules and regulations. And the place to start was the savings-and-loan industry, whose lobbyists had been allowed to write their own deregulation bill.

Of the 435 members of the House of Representatives, only four rose in the middle of the night to oppose that bill: Jim Leach, that decent Republican from Iowa, and three Texas Democrats, all of them with populism bone-deep in their political makeup. There's a reason that Texans describe freezing weather by saying "cold as a banker's heart." Because the Garn-St. Germain bill had been written largely in secret, no one was quite sure what was in it. But the Texans rose to oppose it anyway: Jim Wright, Jim Mattox and Henry B. Gonzalez. You can look it up.

If only we had listened to Henry B. as early as 1983, when he warned that Reagan's HUD Secretary Samuel Pierce was an agent for politically favored special interests. If only we had listened to Henry B. when he warned us how often PAC money was making our representatives the captives of special interests rather than the public interest.

If only we had insisted they follow his example and not accept money from special interests before their own committees. If only we had listened to Henry B. when he warned us about the concentration of power in larger banks instead of encouraging it. If only we had listened to Henry B. when he told us over the years that the Federal Reserve was too secretive, too powerful, too unresponsive to the public interest. And when Henry B. tells you that Alan Greenspan is a liar, you can look for the man's nose to grow.

And, Texas, beloved Texas, how many years of agony would we have saved ourselves if we had listened to Henry B. during the hideous "seg session" in 1957, when he single-handedly tried to fend off some of the ugliest, most racist legislation ever to disgrace this state? Ronnie Dugger of The Texas Observer described Henry B.'s famous filibuster in the Texas Senate as follows:

"He started roaring, he roared on, and he closed roaring; never has his like been seen here before. For 22 hours he held the floor, an eloquent, an erudite, a genuine and a passionate man; and any whose minds he didn't enter had slammed the doors and buried the keys.

"He spoke for those who have no voice of their own. He spoke for the Latin-Americans who have been sweated, cheated and ratholed. 'Who speaks for the Negroes? What about them?' he cried. 'Why do one-tenth of the people of Texas have no representatives in the Legislature? Why do they get the lowly jobs always? Is Texas liberty only for Anglo-Saxons?' He rose to help prevent 'the loss of just one liberty for which men have died—men have died, not just talked, talk is easy.' His colleagues were ready to quit, but he would not. 'What a noble opportunity to enlist in a cause that's eternal, the maintenance of the dignity of a human! For whom does the bell toll? You, the white man, think it tolls for the Negro. I say, the bell tolls for you. It is ringing for us all, for us all.'"

Henry B. in full rhetorical flight is eloquent like few others. Thirty-nine years

after that astonishing filibuster, a fool named LaFalce from New York tried to take Henry B.'s job as the ranking Democrat on the House Banking Committee. Henry B. rose to speak and gave that new generation of politicians a lesson in how it's done: "How can I acquiesce in a thing that ignores my record of honorable and successful leadership? How can I be silent in the face of such an injustice?" LaFalce later confessed to reporters, "Henry was so good, I almost voted for him."

Henry B. is not always high-flown. In the 1950s, the politically correct way to refer to Chicanos was "Latin-Americans." Henry B. once observed that a Latin-American is "a Mexican with a poll tax." Nor did he later cotton to "Chicano." Just plain "American" was always good enough for Henry B., no hyphens, as was just plain "Democrat."

On Flag Day in 1993, disgusted by the syrupy display of patriotism, Henry B. said the House was "like a good little herd, reminiscent of the Hitlerian period: Sieg heil, sieg heil." When outraged Republicans demanded that he be censured, Henry B. said, "It must have hit pretty close to those goose-steppers."

I once wrote that Henry B. had a barely perceptible accent (I was wrong; he has no accent—only the faintest Hispanic intonation in his speech) and could not understand why he was so infuriated by what seemed to me a harmless remark. I later learned from reading an old issue of the Observer: "When the time came for him to go to junior high, his accent was so thick they made fun of him. He had read that Demosthenes of Athens developed his oratory by shouting at the sea with pebbles in his mouth, so he, Henry Gonzalez, did that. Long evenings, he read Carlyle aloud with rocks in his mouth 'until papa though I was nuts and told me to stop.' He had a friend correct his enunciation as he read out from Robert Louis Stevenson. Nights, his sister and brothers would creep up to his bedroom window and watch him declaiming to a mirror, and they would run off, giggling."

No one in Washington seemed to understand Henry B.; he was always stigmatized as a "maverick," a "loner," a "lone wolf." What did Henry B. Gonzalez ever care about running with the pack? From his earliest days on the San Antonio City Council, he was at the lonely end of many an 8-1 vote. "The vote that carries the weight of moral conviction behind it, it has been my observation, is a vote that eventually triumphs," he once said.

Of course, we all relished Henry B.'s proper Texan tendency to duke it out when necessary. He had been an amateur boxer at the University of Texas at Austin, and over his years as a probation officer, city official and even in Congress, he was willing to mix it up. He once got into a shoving match in the cloak room with another congressman who had insulted him on the floor. And at the age of 70, he slugged some jerk who had called him a communist in a restaurant. Served the guy right, we all felt.

Like Barbara Jordon, who later followed him in the Texas Senate, Henry B. has been a First and an Only for much of his life. First Mexican-American in the Texas Senate, first elected to Congress from Texas. And I think, like her, his most important contribution may be as a role model. For four generations of Tejanos, Henry B. has been the model, the one from whom they all learned. They could not have had a better.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, we have no further speakers so I would like to close with some final comments about Mr. GONZALEZ and that would be mostly to note some personal observations.

First, I think we all recognize the work of HENRY B. GONZALEZ as a colleague, and those who have been in this institution longer than I could speak to the many things that he has done beyond even the years when I could remember the civil rights community coming forward and fighting for the privilege and the honor of serving all Americans well and making sure all of us as Americans had the right to live freely.

But I speak as someone who has benefited from what HENRY GONZALEZ has done over the years. And I know that I was able to be the first in my family to go on to college because of people like HENRY B. GONZALEZ. I know that I have an opportunity to serve in this House because of the work of people like HENRY B. GONZALEZ. And I know that even though the former chairman and the ranking member of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services will be retiring soon, very shortly, it is only fitting that we recognize him this evening, this year, before he does leave. Most of the time we wait until someone has retired or passed on. In this case, I think it is appropriate that we recognize Mr. GONZALEZ.

It has been a difficult time of transition for the State of Texas. Earlier this year, Texas and all America lost one of its patriots, a colleague of ours, a great man, someone who devoted much of his life serving this country in time of war and in time of peace, Frank Tejeda, who passed away, also from San Antonio. Now we find HENRY B. GONZALEZ retiring.

We are going to lose two tremendous individuals in this House, but fortunately at least San Antonio will know that one of those individuals will return and be a member of the family in San Antonio.

It gives me great pride to say to anyone who can hear tonight that HENRY B. GONZALEZ deserves the recognition of an American hero. He will go down in the history books of America and he is the reason why America continues and will continue to have a glorious history, because we have a gentleman who served this country so well and has made so many of us so proud.

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Speaker, today we take the opportunity to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to the dean of the Texas delegation, Representative HENRY B. GONZALEZ.

His leadership and courage has served as an inspiration for every Member of the Texas delegation, for every Member of Congress, and for the citizens of our country.

Congressman GONZALEZ was born on May 3, 1916.

He married Bertha Cuellar in November 1940. He has 8 adult children, 21 grandchildren, and 3 great-granddaughters.

Educated in the San Antonio public school system, he later attended San Antonio College, studied engineering at the University of Texas, and graduated from St. Mary's University School of Law.

Representative GONZALEZ prior to his tenure in the U.S. House of Representatives served

as deputy director for the San Antonio Housing Authority, a member of the city council of San Antonio, mayor pro-tem, and as a State senator.

As State senator in the 1950's HENRY B.'s filibuster against segregationist laws are legendary.

On November 4, 1961, Representative GONZALEZ started his illustrious career in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Representative GONZALEZ' 36-year tenure is an example for all of us to follow. HENRY B. has always been a dedicated public servant, who does everything he can to help his district.

Currently, he is the ranking member on the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

His tenure in the House in dotted with moments of great achievements. As chairman, Congressman GONZALEZ, shepherded through 71 bills from introduction to enactment. Bills such as those creating a safe place for depositors to put their money, making more credit available to small businesses.

One of the greatest achievement for his district was passing public laws that made it possible to hold the 1968 HemisFair in San Antonio. This achievement gave rise to the city's convention center, exhibition hall, restaurants, which has become a popular tourist and meeting site for our country.

The Honorable HENRY B. GONZALEZ, has been a model for all of us to follow. He is a man who stands on principle. He shows all of us on a day-to-day basis what it means to be a public servant. HENRY B., thank you for everything, we'll miss you.

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for taking the time to bring us together on the House floor to pay tribute to a man who has been a groundbreaking pioneer for Hispanics and for Texans.

HENRY B. GONZALEZ came to the House of Representatives in 1961, before any other Hispanics were elected from the State of Texas.

Before that, he was the first Hispanic elected to the San Antonio City Council and the first Hispanic elected to the Texas State Senate in the 20th century.

He was a trailblazer for all of us who were elected after him.

To see the future, you must stand on the shoulders of a giant.

When HENRY B. GONZALEZ was elected in 1961, many of us stood on his shoulders and saw a glimpse of our own future.

When I was running for reelection as county commissioner back in 1972, HENRY B. came to Corpus Christi to host a fundraiser for me.

It was a wildly successful event, just because the chairman was involved.

He left his legislative mark, and he left his personal mark on a host of issues—on education, on banking, on civil rights, and on the right of the people to be informed about their Government.

HENRY B. has been a different kind of public servant all his life.

It was terribly important to him not to be typecast into a particular role in public life.

He didn't really affiliate with the Hispanic Caucus, because he did not want to be known as the Hispanic; he wanted to be known as the legislator.

He certainly made his mark on the world of Congress and legislation.

As chairman of the House Banking Committee, he saw over 70 bills pass through his committee and into law.

These laws have a direct influence on the lives of people today.

These laws ranged from guaranteeing depositors a safe place to put their savings, to making more credit available to small businesses, to strengthening laws pertaining to money laundering, bank fraud, and other financial crimes.

He was a maverick in this body and in this place.

He held hearings to shed light on the Federal Reserve, U.S. policy with pre-war Iraq, the Bank of Commerce and Credit International scandal, and the 1980's savings and loan disaster.

HENRY B. GONZALEZ is a proud man and a Texan to the core his soul.

When someone called him a Communist at a restaurant long ago, he clinched his fist and smacked them across the face—their's fighting words in Texas.

He never forgot his roots and he never let anyone else forget either.

Tonight, I offer HENRY B. my very best regards and my best wishes.

We will miss you terribly, Mr. Chairman, but you deserve to spend this time enjoying your life with Bertha and all those grandchildren.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say goodbye to my good friend and esteemed colleague Congressman HENRY B. GONZALEZ. There are few Congresspersons who have served their constituents and the country with such integrity, passion, and vision.

Liberalism may currently be out of fashion, but HENRY GONZALEZ is a liberal in absolutely the best sense of the word. Guided by the courage of his convictions he did not care if the positions he took were unpopular.

HENRY GONZALEZ distinguished himself as a master public policy maker. He was a wealth of information and had an absolute command of a wide range of issues. I remember when I first came to Congress he was often on the floor talking and educating the American people—and fellow Congress members, I might add—about the important issues of the day.

I also had the honor of serving on the Banking and Financial Services Committee with HENRY, through much of his tenure as the chairman of the committee as well as ranking democratic member of the committee. His leadership on the committee will not be forgotten.

Throughout his career, Congressman GONZALEZ has been a prolific legislator, passing over 70 major pieces of legislation and conducting over 500 hearings. What runs through all of his work is an unflinching commitment to using the power of the Federal Government to protect the American people. The following are just a few of his many legislative contributions as a champion of the poor.

The Community Development Banking and Financial Institutions Act of 1993. This act created the Community Development Financial Institutions Program to help encourage lending and economic development in poor communities.

The Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act; HENRY wrote the most far-reaching and significant housing legislation enacted in the past decade. This legislation significantly increased Federal funding for housing programs and supported a number of new affordable housing programs; and legislation to protect consumers from abusive credit bureau practices, to ensure the safety and soundness

of our banking system, and strengthen safeguards against money laundering.

In addition to his work in the areas of housing, banking and community development, HENRY was a tireless fighter against discrimination and injustice.

Congressman GONZALEZ was a champion for the rights of all minorities and championed the cause for civil rights of Mexican-Americans and immigrants. He successfully opposed the Bracero Act and spoke throughout his career against anti-immigrant, and anti-worker legislation.

His first piece of legislation as a Congressman was a resolution calling for the abolition of the poll tax that still existed in five States in early 1960's. His action led to the adoption of the 24th amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

These are just a few—and I emphasize "a few"—of the many, many legislative accomplishments of HENRY GONZALEZ.

Only a small number of persons have had the opportunity to represent our country in Congress. Few have enjoyed as long a tenure and prolific legislative history as HENRY GONZALEZ. Even fewer distinguish themselves by embodying the best attributes of a public servant for the common man. HENRY, you are truly one of a kind and we will miss you dearly. The American people will miss you as well.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, today, we honor Congressman HENRY GONZALEZ of Texas, a champion of justice who is retiring after a lifetime of public service. Thoughtful, passionate and committed to the people of his district and our country, Congressman GONZALEZ has been the quintessential citizen-statesman.

I have always admired his willingness to stand against the tide when he felt he was right. Like few I've known, Congressman GONZALEZ has the courage of his convictions. Whether it was civil rights, housing issues, or allegations of governmental wrongdoing, Congressman GONZALEZ pursued the matter with both intelligence and vigor.

His sense of self is remarkable. At once proud and down-to-earth, wise but quick to action, kind yet strong, Congressman GONZALEZ imparts confidence to his friends, and earns the respect of his adversaries. I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to learn from him as we've worked together over the past 20 years.

So HENRY, I thank you for your leadership and dedicated service. I thank you for your commitment to justice. Most of all, though, I thank you for your friendship.

I wish you well as you return home to the community you love and have so ably represented during your fine career.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of our colleague, HENRY GONZALEZ and his lifetime of commitment to our Nation.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, in Texas we adhere to the philosophy that if it comes from Texas not only is it bigger and better, but it's definitely the biggest and the best. Ours is the State of legends. It's also the State from where many of the Nation's most legendary people come. There's the legendary Speaker of the House, Sam Rayburn. There's the legendary 36th President of the United States, Lyndon Johnson.

And tonight, we pay well-deserved tribute to another great individual who is a living legend, and who will go down in the annals of history as one of the true giants of this institution—

our distinguished colleague, the legendary HENRY B. GONZALEZ.

Having only come to Congress in January, I am new to this body and therefore, unfortunately have not had the privilege, as so many of you have, of closely working with Congressman GONZALEZ.

What is not new to me, however, is his 36-year record of achievement and accomplishment here in the House of Representatives, nor his record as a Texas State Senator in the 1950's where he became a civil rights icon fighting for the rights of Hispanics to attend public schools.

His mark has been far-reaching. This is a man who has been a defender of public housing programs for the poor. This is a man who has fought for equity in education. This is a man who, during a time of crisis reorganized, and in the process of doing so, revitalized the savings and loan industry.

He has been a champion of small business, an advocate for the underprivileged—of all ethnic backgrounds, I might add—HENRY B. GONZALEZ has been, and is, nothing less than a maverick.

I have the greatest respect and admiration for the dean of our delegation for all that he has done, and for the role model he has been and will continue to be for so many. As the first Hispanic in Congress from Texas, he paved the way for many of us who are here today.

Your remarkable achievements over the years have shown us all why it is so important to work tirelessly for what we believe in. You have taught us why we must be dedicated to the pursuit of excellence. You have shown how goals are, indeed, attainable, but not always easy to achieve. Even more importantly, I think you have shown that within each and every one of us there is the potential to make a real difference in the world we live in, but that to make such a difference one must be involved.

Some lead. Others inspire. Through your words and actions you have done both. You have set the standard that others will now strive to reach. It's a high benchmark, and I think everyone here on both sides of the aisle will agree that your legacy to this institution will both be enduring and rich. In my mind there isn't any question that no one can ever fill your shoes, but then, isn't that what defines a legend—one-of-a-kind?

HENRY B. GONZALEZ—We're going to miss your leadership, but most of all we're going to miss you.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay a special tribute to a great Texan, Congressman HENRY B. GONZALEZ. Congressman GONZALEZ has announced that he will resign from Congress at the end of the year, and all of Texas will miss him dearly.

Over the years, Congressman GONZALEZ has worked diligently on banking and housing legislation due to his committee assignments and Ranking Member position on the Banking Committee and its subcommittees. Not content to work only on behalf of San Antonio and the State of Texas, Congressman GONZALEZ has concentrated on issues such as gun control, crime problems, education, health, and other issues of national concern.

During his tenure as Banking Committee Chairman, Congressman GONZALEZ and his subcommittee chairman conducted more than

500 hearings and shepherded 71 bills through the legislative process from introduction to enactment. Among the major bills produced by the Committee that became law was legislation guaranteeing depositors a safe place to put their savings, making more credit available to small businesses, reauthorizing Federal housing laws, and strengthening the laws pertaining to money laundering, bank fraud, and other Federal crimes. Without a doubt, the country is a much better place for average Americans because of his stewardship in Congress over the years.

Prior to his election to Congress, Congressman GONZALEZ served for 5 years as a Senator in the Texas Legislature where he attracted worldwide attention through his filibusters against various bills upholding or facilitating the principles of segregation. With his election to the Texas Senate in 1956, the Congressman became the first citizen of Mexican descent to be seated in that body in 110 years. All minorities in Texas owe Congressman GONZALEZ a large debt of gratitude for his unflinching commitment over the years to the principles of equal protection and treatment under the law.

During his 5 years in the Texas Senate, Congressman GONZALEZ introduced, cosponsored or managed 42 bills, including those concerning slum clearance programs and control of lobbying. He opposed legislation that required moderate and low income groups to bear a greater part of the tax burden. In a special session of the legislature in 1961 he filibustered, unsuccessfully, for 5 hours against passage of a sales tax act. In a special legislative session in 1957, he filibustered alone for 20 consecutive hours against three segregation bills. Having served in both the Texas House and Senate, I benefited and learned from Congressman GONZALEZ' legacy of dedication working on behalf of the poor and disenfranchised.

HENRY GONZALEZ followed his conscience and has always done what he thought was right. When he speaks, everyone listens, and when people speak to him, he listens. He will be missed by all of us. The Texas delegation and the entire Congress have lost a valuable colleague. But his wisdom, I hope will continue to be heard and felt in the Halls of Congress and around the Nation.

To the giant of a man that I fondly call "Mr. B," I salute you! I miss you Mr. B.

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues today in honoring Congressman HENRY B. GONZALEZ for his many years of service to the United States and the State of Texas, during which he provided tremendous leadership on banking, housing, civil rights, and countless other issues.

The dean of the Texas Delegation, HENRY B. GONZALEZ will be remembered most of all for the fierce independence, dogged determination, and commitment to doing right that he has brought to every venture he ever undertook.

I am honored to have had the opportunity to serve in the House of Representatives with HENRY B. GONZALEZ, even if for only 3 of his 36 years in this body. He is an example to all of us of a true advocate of the people who brought honor to this House. He is also a true Texan who worked tirelessly to further the best interests of our State.

HENRY B. GONZALEZ served as chairman of the House Banking, Housing and Urban Af-

fairs Committee during perhaps its most difficult period, following the collapse of the Savings and Loans industry. He presided over the drafting and successful enactment of tough S & L bailout legislation which returned stability to a foundering industry. His other legislative accomplishments include legislation guaranteeing depositors a safe place to put their savings, making credit more available to small businesses, reauthorizing Federal housing laws, and strengthening the laws pertaining to money laundering, bank fraud, and other financial crimes. He also shepherded through Congress the National Flood Insurance Reform Act of 1994, legislation of major importance to my district, which shored up the program's premium fund and provided better enforcement of requirements to purchase flood insurance.

Congressman GONZALEZ may best be remembered for his leadership on housing policy, an area where he was a leader not just for Texas but nationally. As Chairman of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Development, Congressman GONZALEZ wrote the Federal housing policy, during the 1980's and much of the 1990's, translating his vision of safe and decent housing for all Americans into the Nation's agenda. In 1990, Congressman GONZALEZ spearheaded the first significant housing overhaul in 16 years, renewing the Federal Government's commitment to affordable housing. His legislation increased Federal funding for housing programs by \$3.3 billion and, for the first time, addressed the housing problems of people with AIDS. This effort followed his successful drive to permanently extend the Federal Housing Administration's authority to insure home mortgage loans thus extending the chance of home ownership to millions of working families and his continued push to address the needs of the homeless. Congressman GONZALEZ' commitment to expanding housing has helped thousands of people across the country improve their lives by obtaining a place to call home.

Congressman GONZALEZ also made his mark in the area of civil rights. From his earliest days in Government he has fought against the evils of segregation and discrimination. In 1956 he became the first citizen of Mexican descent to serve in the Texas State Senate and successfully fought segregationist legislation during his 5-year tenure. True to form, Congressman GONZALEZ still holds the record for the longest filibuster in the history of the Texas Senate, laboring for 36 hours to defeat anti-civil-rights legislation that had passed the Texas House. Congressman GONZALEZ continued his commitment to civil rights throughout his years in Congress. He was an ardent backer of President Johnson's civil rights initiatives during the 1960's and has since sponsored legislation to strengthen the rights of women, minorities, the disabled, and the elderly. His contributions were recently recognized by the Texas NAACP, which honored him with their "Texas Hero Award."

Throughout his career, HENRY B. GONZALEZ fought for government policies that fostered better living and economic conditions for all Americans. He has been the consumer's friend on financial legislation. He is among the fathers of the Community Reinvestment Act. He has championed legislation to strengthen education, economic development, and environmental protection. He has been a strong supporter of civil rights for all Americans, and

improved access to health care for the elderly, veterans, and low-income individuals. He has also supported policies to improve the Nation's infrastructure and promote a strong small business community.

Our entire Nation has benefited from HENRY B. GONZALEZ' service in Congress, and his legacy includes a stronger, more stable banking system that continues to lead the world in innovation and service; a stronger commitment to affordable housing; more open government; and a better quality of life for many Texans and Americans. I am pleased to join my colleagues in honoring Congressman GONZALEZ, but I am sad to see him go. The House Banking Committee will not be the same without HENRY B. GONZALEZ on the top row. His well deserved retirement is a loss for the Nation, the House and the Texas Delegation. I wish him the best in his new career as full-time father, grandfather and husband.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in praising Congressman HENRY B. GONZALEZ for his remarkable career representing the citizens of Texas' 20th Congressional District. Recently, Representative GONZALEZ announced his intention to resign his seat by year's end, signaling the loss of one Congress' truly outstanding leaders and one of the Nation's shining beacons of decency, conviction and courage.

Mr. Speaker, when they talk about Congress being "of the people, and for the people" they use HENRY GONZALEZ as their guide. Both as a local legislator in San Antonio and here in Washington, HENRY GONZALEZ has fought the good fight when it comes to representing our Nation's neediest citizens and championing mainstream values and ideals. His unflagging support and tireless efforts to promote equitable and affordable housing leaves a legacy of fairness and honesty of which the entire Nation can be proud.

HENRY GONZALEZ represents the heart and soul of this institution, as well as that of the Democratic Party. It is his strongly held belief that Congress is the most hallowed symbol of freedom in the western world. And, it is his steadfastness on this and so many other issues that guides HENRY GONZALEZ and has so profoundly touched so many of his colleagues. It is HENRY GONZALEZ' unflinching and unwavering conviction that every man, woman and child deserves a fair shot at the American dream which has helped shape the direction and vision of the Democratic party for many years.

Mr. Speaker, HENRY's stance on issues may not have been popular, they may have run against the grain of conventional wisdom, but if he believed he was on solid moral ground, he stood firm. Mr. Speaker, this kind of character represents the true spirit and tradition of this institution. It is this kind of intestinal fortitude that is all too often lacking in today's society.

In announcing his retirement, HENRY stated that it is "time for me to go home." Few have represented their Districts as faithfully as HENRY GONZALEZ, and I know few Members who are so beloved and revered back home as HENRY GONZALEZ. And, while I know that the people of the 20th Congressional District wish you all the best in your retirement, there are also some who are anxious at the prospect of losing such a giant figure here in Washington.

HENRY, I know this was a difficult decision for you. This body will miss your wisdom,

courage and leadership. I am pleased that you will have more time with your wife Bertha and your eight outstanding children. You have much to be proud of and you deserve every moment of happiness and joy this time will bring. God bless you and God speed in all that you do in the years to come.

Mr. LAFALCE. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct privilege and honor to rise this afternoon to join in a fitting tribute to my friend and respected colleague, HENRY GONZALEZ.

I became a Member of the House in 1975, and from the beginning, HENRY B. GONZALEZ was an example for me and my fellow freshmen. HENRY was a beacon shining brightly, a champion of consumers and of those in society in greatest need. He remains such a beacon.

One does not enter into the presence of HENRY GONZALEZ without learning something. Whether an anecdote about Lyndon Johnson and Texas politics, or a lecture about the depths of despair among the homeless, or a seminar on the intricacies of banking law, HENRY was a true leader. He inspired, cajoled, and probed; always with passion and always fighting for the little guy and for the supremacy of the public interest over narrow private concerns.

I should note in particular the lasting mark that HENRY GONZALEZ has made on the area of housing and community development. He knew how important the Federal role is in helping ensure that all Americans have a decent home in a good neighborhood. He as much as anyone has kept the beacon of Federal aid to our cities lit. He has truly been a conscience of the Congress, and his efforts in this arena will be particularly missed.

HENRY's career in the House may be nearing its end, but we all know that his memory will endure. He has left his stamp on our Nation, and the United States is far better for it. Mr. Speaker, I salute HENRY B. GONZALEZ and wish him and his family all of the best in the years to come.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to pay tribute to a friend, a colleague, and a great American. After a highly distinguished 36 year career in Congress, representing San Antonio, TX, HENRY B. GONZALEZ has announced that he will resign at the end of the year.

Mr. Speaker, when I was first elected to the House in 1982, HENRY GONZALEZ was already an institution in this august body. His leadership on a variety of national issues affecting his constituents, the Hispanic community in general, and the Nation as a whole, are legendary.

During his congressional tenure, HENRY served as chairman of the Committee on Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs from 1989 to 1994. In his capacity as chairman, HENRY successfully promoted legislation guaranteeing depositors a safe place to put their savings. He championed measures facilitating small business access to credit and strengthened the laws against money laundering and bank fraud.

Under his leadership, the Banking, Committee held a countless number of hearings on the Bush administration's prewar Iraq policy. HENRY vigorously investigated the scandal involving the Bank of Commerce and Credit International, and he took the lead in shedding light on the savings and loan debacle of the 1980's.

Throughout his distinguished public service, HENRY has championed the causes of urban

and economic development, affordable housing and civil rights. I'm certain that HENRY must have broken the congressional record for endurance on special orders. I vividly remember how he would tirelessly take to the floor night after night exposing government incompetence, waste, and abuse.

I salute you HENRY. I salute your integrity and leadership. You will be sorely missed.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, today I join my colleagues to honor Congressman HENRY B. GONZALEZ for his noteworthy public accomplishments. Congressman GONZALEZ is a dear personal friend, a mentor, and an invaluable Member of this body.

He was born Enrique Barbosa Gonzalez in San Antonio, TX, on May 3, 1916, to Leonides Gonzalez Cigarroa and Genoveva Barbosa Prince de Gonzalez, who had fled to San Antonio from the state of Durango in Northern Mexico during the Mexican Revolution in 1911. HENRY GONZALEZ attended public schools and graduated from Jefferson High School in 1935. He continued his education at San Antonio College and the University of Texas. In 1943 he graduated from St. Mary's University School of Law.

Prior to joining this body, Congressman Gonzalez was elected in 1953 to the San Antonio City Council, serving as mayor pro tempore for the latter part of his term. He spoke against segregation of public facilities, and the council passed desegregation ordinances. Elected to the Texas State Senate in 1956, GONZALEZ, along with then Senator Abraham Kazen, attracted national attention in 1957 for holding the longest filibuster in the history of the Texas legislature. The filibuster, which lasted 36 hours, succeeded in killing 8 out of 10 racial segregation bills that were aimed at circumventing the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in the Brown versus Board of Education case.

During the 1960 Presidential campaign, John F. Kennedy requested GONZALEZ' help in organizing Viva Kennedy Clubs throughout the country. He served as national cochairman.

HENRY GONZALEZ has served in the U.S. House of Representatives since November 4, 1961. He is third in House seniority and Dean both of the Texas delegation and of Hispanics in Congress. He was the first Hispanic Representative from Texas and has served in Congress longer than any other Hispanic. He will mark 36 years in Congress on November 4, 1997. A humble man with a strong personality, GONZALEZ has received national attention for his various crusades.

During his first term, he was assigned to the Committee on Banking and Currency, which in 1977 became the Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs Committee. He worked for the passage of a number of legislative proposals of the New Frontier and Great Society, including the Housing Act of 1964. He worked on legislation that was eventually incorporated into the Equal Opportunities Act of 1964, and supported the Library Service Act of 1964, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

In the 1970's, GONZALEZ continued with his mission. In 1977, he gained national attention as chairman of the House Assassinations Committee that was established to investigate the murders of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr.

As a member of the House Small Business Committee in the 94th Congress, GONZALEZ

served as chairman of the ad hoc subcommittee on the Robinson-Patman Act, anti-trust legislation, and related matters. He played a key role in salvaging the Robinson-Patman Act, which is considered the "Magna Carta" of small business.

During his 10-year chairmanship—1971–81—of the Subcommittee on International Development Institutions and Finance of the Banking Committee, he sponsored the "Gonzalez amendment," as it is commonly known, to protect U.S. citizens' property from expropriation by countries that receive loans from international development institutions to which the United States contributes.

From 1981 to 1994 he chaired the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Development, and in 1989 he became chairman of the full Banking Committee. During his tenure as chairman of the committee, GONZALEZ dealt with the collapse of the savings and loan industry, a crisis he had predicted throughout the 1980's. In 1991 he led a restructuring of the Federal deposit insurance system. As chairman he earned a reputation for being a fair leader who allowed equitable participation in the creation of bills. He became ranking member of this committee and subcommittee in 1995, relinquishing his chairmanship when the Republicans gained control of the House.

I have the privilege and honor to know HENRY GONZALEZ personally and to serve with him in the U.S. House of Representatives. Congressman GONZALEZ has dedicated his entire life to serving others. With specific regard to his constituents, he has always concentrated on issues that affect water quality and supply, gun control, and crime problems, education, health, and labor/business concerns, to secure the best possible future for San Antonio.

Throughout his career he has been active in writing banking and housing laws, and involved in a wide range of legislation, including urban development, veterans, Federal employees, education, economic development, civil rights, and equal opportunity. We all owe a very special debt of gratitude to his courageous and tireless work.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to pay this tribute to Congressman HENRY B. GONZALEZ, who with his wisdom, fortitude, diligence, and relentless dedication tried, for 36 years, to make this House and the Nation better places and to set an example for all of us to follow. Today, GONZALEZ receives well-deserved recognition in the same institution in which he served with such distinction. I ask my colleagues to join me in conveying best wishes and deep gratitude to Congressman HENRY B. GONZALEZ.

ELIMINATING THE MARRIAGE PENALTY TAX

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRADY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. MCINTOSH] is recognized for the remaining time before midnight as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MCINTOSH. Mr. Speaker, let me say to my colleagues that the purpose of our session at this time would be to discuss a bill that a friend of mine, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. WELLER] and I have introduced to eliminate the marriage penalty tax from our Tax Code.

Tonight I would like to share with my colleagues and those watching exactly what the impact of that marriage penalty tax has been on average Americans, the devastating effect that it has had on their families and how our legislation will once and for all remove that terrible policy from our Tax Code.

For several weeks now I have been using my Internet site to allow people to write to me on the marriage penalty and how it has been affecting them. A lot of them have taken the opportunity to write at www.house.gov/mcintosh and tell me exactly what it means in their life. And so I would hope to be able to share with my colleagues some of those responses tonight.

Before we do that, I wanted to yield time to another colleague who is a member of the Committee on Ways and Means that will be considering this bill next year as we take up the question of how to further reduce the tax burden on American families in this Congress. It is with great pleasure that I would yield as much time as he would require to my colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. ENGLISH].

MR. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Indiana, and I especially want to thank him for joining with the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. WELLER] in promoting H.R. 2456, of which I am an original cosponsor which will provide real relief to working families.

Mr. Speaker, the marriage penalty is a tax policy completely divorced from reality. Couples are forced to pay higher taxes because they are married and many couples with two incomes get hit with a heavy tax bill when they get married. The current policy provides that two-income married couples get punished by the taxman for pursuing the American dream.

Now, in my view as a member of the Committee on Ways and Means, I feel strongly that tax policy should be marriage neutral. That there should be no penalty, no incentive attached to being married as opposed to being unmarried. I arrive at this from personal experience.

Mr. Speaker, 5 years ago, my wife and I got married. She was a schoolteacher. I was a policy analyst in the Pennsylvania Legislature, and neither of us are what anyone, not even the bureaucrats in the Treasury, would classify as rich. We both had incomes in the thirties. We were both comfortable. But when we got married, we were hit with a tax penalty of over \$1,000.

This is not an isolated instance. There are 21 million couples in America who are hit with the marriage tax penalty which on the average is equal to a half a year in car payments. That is an incredible disincentive and an incredible burden to couples that elect to get married.

Mr. Speaker, this is I think a real problem in America that falls particularly in certain areas. It is a burden on working mothers. It is a burden and a tax on working women. It is a tax that

is particularly onerous on the poor. I was struck that two-earner families earning under \$20,000 a year face a marriage penalty equal to roughly 8 percent of their income on the average. That is a much bigger burden than any other class.

It is worth noting that tax policy in other countries, if anything, incentivizes as part of cultural policy getting married, as opposed to penalizing it as part of the Tax Code.

Mr. Speaker, I think we need to do something about this. I want to thank the gentleman from Indiana for his efforts. I want to note that another colleague of mine from Ways and Means, the gentleman from California [Mr. HERGER] has introduced H.R. 2593 which also addresses this problem.

It is worth noting that back in 1993, the Committee on Ways and Means reported out a bill that was ultimately vetoed by the President that provided real tax relief for America, including some relief under the marriage penalty issue.

I think that as part of an upcoming tax cut, we should have the courage in the House to address this problem of the marriage penalty. I believe, as a member of the Committee on Ways and Means, that this is a Government policy that punishes folks for doing the right thing. I think we should move aggressively in coming months to try to cut back on the marriage penalty as part of an effort to reduce the tax burden on middle-class families.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me. I know he has some specific, striking instances where people have written into him or contacted him to offer their specific situations.

Mr. MCINTOSH. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for his support of this bill, and his support is instrumental as the committee moves forward to consider this in its agenda next year.

Let me now yield to another colleague of mine, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. MANZULLO], who will talk about this issue, but also share with our colleagues some of those interesting letters that we have received over the Internet from people about how this marriage penalty is affecting them in their lives.

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, all laws have faces and every time this body enacts a law, it affects people. The American people are either the beneficiaries of what we do here or they are the losers. And how incongruous it is that in a society that is literally crumbling, if we take a look at the polls of the people and ask them what are the most important issues, sometimes they will reflect economic issues but often they speak in terms of cultural deterioration, and a system where America is really reaching out to recapture the moral underpinnings that made it so great, people will say that there is a moral crisis in America.